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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



ADDRESS
OF
GEORGE THOMPSON, (M.P.)
OF ENGLAND,
TO THE
LEGISLATURE AND CITIZENS
OF
VERMONT.

DELIVERED IN REPRESENTATIVES' HALL, OCTOBER 22, 1864.

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MONTPELIER :

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1864.

ADDRESS.

*Mr. President, Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives,
Citizens of Montpelier, Ladies and Gentlemen :—*

As a man with ardent aspirations for the triumph everywhere of the sacred cause of human freedom I appear before you. I come before you as a careful student of your nation's history, as one who has, from his youth up, admired the principles and favored the institutions and cordially approved the form of government under which you have for so many years lived. As a dweller in your country on a previous occasion, it has been my privilege to study you as you are, not to learn you from books alone or from report, but to live amongst you and to be permitted to observe the manner of life of the people of this country. For four years I have been the very humble but earnest and disinterested vindicator of the character and institutions of America, in the presence of those of my countrymen at home, who have, unhappily for themselves, and to their discredit, withheld from this country that sympathy to which she was so justly entitled in the hour of her bitter anguish, and in her mighty struggle with the enemies of human liberty. (Applause.) I will yield to no man in this country for ardent interest and deep solicitude in respect to the issues of that mighty conflict in which the two great parties in this country are now engaged. Having had such opportunities to know you and your institutions, and with such views, I heartily and cordially, and esteeming it at the same time a very high honor, accepted the invitation forwarded to me in the terms of the joint resolution of the House of Assembly of Vermont. I have been permitted recently to survey this beautiful and romantic State, and as I have wandered through it, traveled along its valleys and gazed upon its verdant hills, I have been reminded of a portion of my own native country in which I was permitted to spend seven happy years, and in which I am an acknowledged citizen by a special vote of the city of Edinburgh. It reminded me of Scotland,—

Land of the brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,

home of a people brave and true, and of a noble faith, to which they have given attestation by glorious deeds, and which they have sealed with their blood. Although I had never seen Vermont, I knew something of your history, something of what you had done for your common country in days long past, when you deemed it but just to yourselves and your

children to dissolve your connection with the parent land. I knew something of what you had done as a people and a State, while in conflict with a sister State, and how jealously you had guarded your own rights and privileges and liberties. I had read of that man whose statue I passed a few minutes ago, in ascending the steps of this Capitol, and how he summoned a neighboring fort to surrender in the name of the great Jehovah and Continental Congress. (Applause.) I had read of that Vermont Judge who when the slave power would have claimed property in man, and seized a human being as a chattel, would be satisfied with nothing less than a bill of sale from the Almighty. (Applause.)

I had looked into your natural history; I had found that you, like other states in the Union, were not deficient in snakes, that you had black snakes, white snakes, green snakes, ring snakes, striped snakes, ribbed snakes and rattle snakes; but I was rejoiced to find in all my researches into the natural history of the Green Mountain State, that you had no such a reptile among you as a copperhead. (Applause.) I discovered, however, to my deep regret, that you had something which is perhaps equivalent to that,—a Right Rev. Bishop who has defended slavery from the Bible. (Applause.)

I have read the message of your esteemed Governor, and I know therefore how affairs stand in the main between you and the nation. I have looked a little into your finances, and with interest, but with much more interest into the course you have pursued with regard to furnishing gallant men of this State to fight the battles of Union and liberty at the South. I find that you have not only furnished your quota, but have always exceeded that quota, and that even now after so many calls, Vermont has not only complied with the recent requisition for additional troops, but has now a thousand men over and above all requisitions credited to her—a thousand men, each of whom has volunteered to represent his State in the conflict with the demon of slavery at the South.

All this I know of you, and have beside learned by experience something of the hospitality of Vermont. It is no easy matter to come here, because a man I find has to eat his way through the State (laughter), and it has been an appalling thing to me, and I am at this moment suffering, and suffering severely,—shame upon my own indiscretion, but thanks to the hospitality of my host and hostess of a neighboring town—because I partook most unwisely of two large servings of a most delicious New England pudding at dinner, the component parts of which, and the name of which I am not able to inform you. (Laughter.)

Sirs, I remember that I am in America. When the genius of Columbus first pierced the night of ages, and opened up to one world sources of wealth and power and grandeur and glory, and to another woes which imagination cannot depict, there were upon the islands at the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico, scattered throughout the Caribbean Sea, a gentle and inoffensive race that came trooping down to the beach, to receive Columbus and his followers, wherever his vessels appeared, as visitors from Heaven. That entire race was, in process of time, and in the progress of events, reduced to slavery. Under the burden of slavery the whole race perished. The entire race

“Sank beneath the oppressor’s rod,
And left a blank amidst the works of God.”

When the Caribbean Indians had been destroyed, slavery must still have its victims. Recourse was had to Africa, and for four centuries and more Africa has been spoiled of her children by an infernal conspiracy among the nations of Christendom. In this diabolical traffic my own

country has taken a large and infamous share. For three centuries England was deeply engaged in the African slave-trade. She brought slaves to this country, and planted upon this soil that deadly Upas tree that so lately overshadowed your country, and threatened to spread pestilence, poison and death among the inhabitants of this fair land. O see to it that in the mighty conflict in which you are engaged, you pull up that tree by the roots, that you be not satisfied until you have extracted the last root and fibre from your soil, so that your land may evermore be free from the curse and scandal of slavery. All Christendom owes a vast debt to Africa. You have your Africa here at home, and you have a great debt to cancel. The sooner and the more completely you cancel it, the better it will be for you. If you are wise you will do this quickly, and you will do it faithfully. You will pay this debt to the uttermost farthing, you will agree with your adversary quickly, you will leave your gift upon the altar and go and first be reconciled to your brother. For it is in vain to bring to God anything but truth and justice. Your extended territory, your world-wide commerce, your universal education, your pure Protestant Christianity, all of these will fail you, if you oppress, and are hostile to your weaker brother. First be reconciled to your brother, and then go and offer your gift. All the nations of Europe owe a similar duty to Africa,—to Africa whose children, we are told by learned men in this country, were created on purpose to be slaves. What a libel on God to suppose that having made of one blood all nations that on earth do dwell, he should say to his white children, I have created other children of swarthy complexion, with crisp hair, and different conformation of features, and these I hand over to you, as your vassals and slaves and chattels forever. There are those who libel Africa by saying that no good thing can come out of that country; but I can look back upon the pages of history to the time when Africa was first in the arts and sciences, and the seat of learning. When your ancestors and mine were worshipping Thor and Woden, and covering themselves with sheep skins and goat skins, Africa was sending her learned men to her Senate, and had her masters in the arts. Judge not Africa so long as you have the slave vessel upon her coast; judge her not so long as you offer strong drink to her people, and thus aid in their degradation. Let Africa have peace, let her have the light of Christianity; and then I believe for Africa, as for America, there will be a glorious future, and the same God that blesses you will also bless that now benighted country. Need I tell you or remind you, my respected friends, of what took place in this country two centuries and a half ago, how a band of holy men and women, driven from Europe by religious intolerance and priestcraft, fled to these shores in a single vessel, the Mayflower, reached them in mid-winter, and landed upon Plymouth rock? They were the Pilgrim Fathers.

“What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war!
‘They sought a faith’s pure shrine—
Freedom to worship God.’”

Here they found it, here they planted churches, here they built up commonwealths upon the principles of equal liberty, truth and justice. Another vessel came to these shores about the same time. It was a Dutch vessel, and came here from the coast of Africa. It ascended the James river; its cargo was human beasts of burden, it was a slave ship, it discharged its freight of captives upon the virgin soil of America. You are witnesses to-day to the conflict between the two principles established in this country at the time to which I have referred. All that

you are now witnessing, is but the fruit that proceeds from the germination of the seed that was deposited on this soil, when that slave ship landed her cargo in Virginia, and the Pilgrim Fathers first trod upon the snows of Plymouth Rock. Can any man that has faith in God, faith in justice and in truth, doubt the issue of this conflict? No! I did not doubt it thirty years ago, when the abolitionists pure and simple, true and faithful, might have been gathered around this table, with room enough and to spare, and can I doubt it now? Now

“ When, joy and thanks for evermore,
The dreary night is almost passed,
The slumbers of the North are o’er,
The giant stands erect at last.”

Can I doubt it now when merchants and mechanics, politicians, warriors and statesmen, are alike combined together to bring about the settlement of this great question, and to purge this land from its ancient abominations? I cannot. The spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers still lives and is abroad. It is animating those who are on the battle-field and engaged in this contest, as well as those who remain here at home. And that spirit will triumph both here and on the field. Although you have an enemy in front of your armies, and an enemy behind you, yet neither the Southern chivalry, nor the copperheads of Chicago, will be able to avert the catastrophe which will befall slavery, producing its utter defeat, and the establishment of universal liberty. (Applause.)

“ The Pilgrim spirit has not fled,
It walks in noon’s broad light,
And it watches the bed, of the glorious dead,
With the holy stars of night.

It watches the bed of the brave who have bled,
And shall guard your ice bound shore,
Till the waves of the bay where the Mayflower lay,
Shall foam and freeze no more.”

I think there never was a time, when it was more necessary or so necessary as now, that you should have regard for the distinguishing features of your own Revolution of 1776, when you sundered the bonds that bound you to Great Britain. What is the true glory of America? What constituted her glory in 1776? The people of the country were few and scattered, they had no line of railroad, extending as now, for two thousand miles from North to South and East to West. They had no cities, towns, villages and hamlets dotting the surface of this continent almost from the Arctic regions to the Gulf of Panama. No! they were a people few in number, scattered along the seaboard, feeble in resources; and yet they attracted, not only the attention of Europe and the world at large, but won the admiration of mankind. Why was it that the nations stood expectant to catch the sound of the coming conflict? Why did the fire of patriotism which your fathers kindled, glow in so many hearts beside?

“ Why did expectant nations stand,
To catch the coming torch in turn,
And pass from ready hand to hand,
The flame your fathers caused to burn?”

It was because you, a people small in number and weak in resources, had dared to declare, in the face of majestic England, that because she denied you the rights to which you were entitled and was deaf to your entreaties, you would be free. It was because you based your right to freedom upon these self-evident truths,—that all men are created free and equal, and with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It was because you as-

serted that if a government failed to secure to a people these rights, then such people had a right to change their form of government, and thereby secure these blessings to which every man holds a title. That was your glory; and the people of America in the Northern States, going on in the spirit of that Declaration of Independence, seeing in the light of these self-evident truths at once the inconsistency and criminality of slavery, abolished slavery. Massachusetts you know by a decision of her courts of law abolished it. Here in Vermont you enacted as a fundamental law of this State, that any person, whether born here or coming from abroad, should be free on reaching, for a man twenty-one years of age, and for a woman eighteen. When those venerable fathers assembled in Liberty Hall in Pennsylvania, to consult in regard to framing a Constitution for the United States, you will remember that arrangements had been made by the Legislatures of the New England States, of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York, for the gradual extinction of the system of slavery. When the framers of the Constitution then sat down to their work in 1787, the States north of Maryland desired to frame a Constitution in accordance with the character of free States, and only those South of Pennsylvania in accordance with the character of slave States. Can I doubt that the spirit of Liberty was in that Assembly? No. Do I not know of whom that assembly was composed? I do. Can I doubt that there sat men who would have given the liberty which they had gained, to every human being? I cannot. But if the spirit of liberty was there, so also was present the foul spirit of slavery, that spirit which marred your Declaration of Independence. For among the reasons assigned as a justification of the revolt of the American colonies was this, that the King of England, in derogation of his character as a Christian, and in violation of his character as a sovereign, had foisted slavery and the slave trade upon the Colonies, and had not heeded their request to abolish it. The spirit of slavery expunged that record, and although it was in the hand writing of Thomas Jefferson and may still be seen in the archives of your country, yet it was expunged by the framers of the Constitution, because they knew that this allusion to the system would be dangerous to their projects. The same spirit of slavery was at work in the preparation of your Articles of Confederation, by which you were loosely held together as a congeries of commonwealths for about ten years. The spirit of slavery was there; for in those articles certain rights and privileges and franchises are limited to free white men, ignoring and barring from the enjoyment of the rights of citizenship, all beside these. This spirit of slavery, in the convention held in Liberty Hall, demanded as conditions precedent to a Union, the continuance of the slave-trade, the rendition of fugitive slaves, and representation for three-fifths of the slaves of the South, the power resulting from that representation, however, to be lodged in the hands and exercised by the will of the tyrants ruling those slaves. They (the slaveholders) stipulated as a condition, that in the event of these men ever waking up to a consciousness of their merit and rights, and making an attempt to burst their bonds asunder, the whole power of the Federal Union should be employed to quell that insurrection, and bring them again under the heel of their haughty lords. This was one of the demands which the South made of those who had inherited the possessions and breathed something of the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers. Let John Quincy Adams tell the rest. He says, that our fathers, driven to the alternative of either sacrificing the Union or the principles of liberty, yielded in an evil hour to the demands by which they were opposed, smothered their consciences, forgot what they owed to justice and to God, averted their faces, bowed their heads, and with

trembling hands signed the bond which made slavery forever after, the vital principle of the American Government.

What followed as the result of those compromises? First, let me observe that all of your subsequent perplexities, all the discord that has been heard in this country, every serious quarrel that has taken place between the several States of this Union, all the apprehensions that you have ever felt respecting a dissolution of your Union, have flowed from that original and fatal error,—the compromise with slavery in the Constitution of the United States. My friends, it is a law of God, that any immoral principle in any human law, shall prove to be the seminal principle of revolution, and shall work out its own destruction. You put into your Constitution a compromise that was as certain to shatter your Union, as the truth of God was certain to stand while the lies and subterfuges of men should be swept away. In your anxiety to establish liberty, to transmit it to your posterity, you were guilty of compromising the rights of half a million of human beings on your own soil; and by incorporating into your law and Constitution a vicious and immoral principle, you ensured its dissolution. It needed only time and circumstances to liberate this mighty mischief, and permit it to do its appropriate work. Time has been afforded and circumstances have aided, and now your Union is destroyed. The lightnings of Heaven have blasted it, and you must *build again*. The great lesson, or one great lesson this Republic has to learn from the events that are passing before her at this hour, is this, that if she would secure future Union of the people of this continent, and make this Republic lasting and eternal, it must be founded upon principles as immovable as eternal justice, and as broad as the family of mankind. (Applause).

I know the pleas that were set up to justify this departure from eternal rectitude in the framing of the Constitution. The compromise entered into was said to be a political necessity. A political necessity to ignore the rights of half a million of immortal beings! Past events have shown the truth of the axiom, that that which is morally wrong can never be politically right. Some said, "what harm can there be in leaving out of account a few hundreds of thousands of dark-skinned, woolly-headed, flat-nosed, despised and ignorant Africans and their descendants? Is it not better that their rights should be postponed, than that the attempt to form a Union should fail?" Others comforted themselves with the hope and belief that slavery would die out. It was already unprofitable. The slaves were increasing too fast. The masters were thinking of emancipation. Let the system alone, and it would die a natural death. And so the voice of conscience was smothered, and the spirit of slavery triumphed, and a democratic republic was founded, in which slavery was tolerated, and protected, and fenced about with Constitutional provisions and guarantees. Vain hope! that a nation whose foundations were laid in unrighteousness could permanently endure!

No lesson is more clearly or emphatically taught in history than this: that a nation—no matter how exalted in arts, or invincible in arms, or distinguished for letters,—if founded in oppression and wrong, must, sooner or later, unless it repent and reform, perish. Pharaoh refused to "let the people go," and where is Egypt? The princes of Edom refused to let the fugitives from Egyptian slavery pass through their land, and where is Idumea? The Jews refused to liberate their bondmen, and, themselves made captive, they hung their harps upon the willows in a strange land, and mourned for the Zion from which they had been banished for their sins. Where are Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Carthage? Their broken columns stand childless in the desert. Where

Thebes and Memphis reared their stupendous monuments, you find only the solitary hut or shifting tent of the restless Arab. Where is India? The light of civilization that first dawned upon the Ganges, has traveled westward until its rays have penetrated the latest built log house upon the distant prairies of the American Continent, while the teeming millions of Hindostan—groping in worse than Cimmerian darkness—stretch out their hands to the more favored people of the West, crying, “Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.” Where are now the “Isles of Greece?”

“Eternal Summer gilds them yet,
But all except their Sun is set.”

Where now is the spot where Plato stood surrounded by his disciples; where Demosthenes entranced his hearers; where Phidias exhibited his master pieces? Behold the magnificent shore where Constantine erected his proud capital! or the ruins of the Alhambra, where the victorious Moor rioted in all the pleasures of a refined sensuality! What is the lesson which is taught the pilgrim, as he wanders over this wide waste of once grand, but now fallen empires—these crumbling ruins of cloud-capped towns, and gorgeous palaces, and solemn temples? Is it not this: that righteousness alone exalteth and establisheth a nation, and that sin will prove the ruin of the proudest and mightiest of the empires of the earth? And, think you, that God would allow even America to violate with impunity the laws he has given for the government of the world?

To the superficial observer, nothing appeared less probable, a few years ago, than the events we are witnessing to-day. Slavery had lengthened its cords, and strengthened its stakes, and enlarged its borders; and cotton was king, not only ruling America, but aspiring to dictate to other nations the policy they should pursue. England was told that she was at the mercy of the cottonocracy of the South. Now, all is changed. The throne of slavery totters to its fall. Cotton is no longer king. Truth is asserting its legitimate influence over the minds of men; and, above all, the opportunity is afforded of returning to those great principles, through a departure from which the present calamities have overtaken the nation. Now is the time for men to speak truth one to another. God forbid that I should, at such a crisis, withhold from my kinsmen on these shores the counsel which the circumstances of the hour seem to demand. That counsel is—make haste to get rid of slavery. Extirpate from the land the giant evil which brought your present afflictions upon you. Hear the voice that comes to you from the fields where lie the groaning and the dying; from the hospitals where languish the wounded and the mutilated; from the distant grave yards, where your sons await the resurrection; from the soil which slavery has blasted, as with a curse; from the millions who are sighing for deliverance from their bonds. Let me gather up these voices, and utter them in your ears, in the language of sacred writ. In the midst of treason and conspiracy, of rapine and desolation, of bereavement and mourning, of battle and of blood, hear the voice which points out your duty and promises your reward. It says,—“loose the bands of wickedness; undo the heavy burdens; let the oppressed go free; break every yoke.” Here is your duty. Now for the promise. “Then shall your light break forth as the morning; your righteousness shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall bring up the rear. If thou wilt take away from the midst of thee the yoke, and bring the poor you have cast out into the house, the Lord God himself will guide you continually, and you shall build the old waste places, and raise up the foundations of many generations, and be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell

in ; and henceforth you shall ride upon the high places of the earth, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

At no time could these solemn words be more fitly uttered in the hearing of American citizens. You are about to exercise the most responsible trust ever committed to freemen. You are about to decide by your votes the policy this nation shall for the future adopt. Whether it shall proclaim liberty throughout all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof—and to secure the peace of the country, the plaudits of mankind, and, better still, the approval of Heaven ; or whether you will again compromise with evil, and by so doing, make your name a hissing and a by-word ; and by consenting to the enslavement of others, make shipwreck, ultimately, of your own liberties. If you would secure the blessing and avert the curse, " break every yoke," and " bring the poor that are cast out into the house." Mark ! they must be brought " into the house "—into the temple of liberty—into the enjoyment of those Constitutional privileges which you claim for yourselves. They must not be left in the porch, or on the steps, or in the highways or negro quarters. There must be no " putting forth of the fingers," no " hiding yourselves from your own flesh," but a full and generous recognition of their equal rights ; in a word, a practical acknowledgement of their manhood and claim to American citizenship. And why should not this be done ? what is there that is dreadful in doing justice to the black man ? What cause is there to hate him, save that for centuries he has been injured and oppressed ? He is docile, industrious, loyal, brave and forgiving ; why should he not be free ? You are not to-day suffering from an insurrection amongst four millions of slaves, but from an insurrection amongst their tyrants. The wounds inflicted on liberty in this country, are wounds she has received in the house of her friends. Your enemies are the southern oligarchs whom you have indulged, petted, spoiled, and nursed into arrogance and treason ; and those baser traitors at the North, who, under the protection of the Constitution, have abetted the armed rebels of Secession, and have secretly conspired to overthrow the Government under which they are still living. (Applause.)

As I have before observed, when the Union was formed, slavery was left a legalized, domestic institution in six of the thirteen States. Let us bestow a few moments' attention on the march of the slave power to supreme authority. The six States in which it was supposed slavery would die out, became fifteen. The slaveholding politicians of the South, well knowing that the multiplication of slave States would give them increased political power, as well as an additional field for the extension of their system, began by dividing the States they already possessed. Thus Kentucky was formed out of Virginia ; Tennessee out of North Carolina ; Mississippi and Alabama out of Georgia, and the consequent right acquired, of sending eight additional Senators to Washington. Then the slave power obtained the purchase, from France, of the vast territory of Louisiana ; and then the purchase of the peninsula of Florida from Spain ; and then, in violation of the organic law of 1787, they got possession of Missouri ; and then, by treachery, rebellion and war, they acquired Texas. Thus the area of the slave States was extended from two hundred thousand square miles, in 1790, to eight hundred thousand in 1860 ; and the number of their slaves increased, from half a million in the former year, to four millions and a quarter, when the last census was taken. The estimated marked value of their human beasts of burden increased, from two hundred and twenty millions of dollars, to twenty-five hundred millions. The cultivation of one article of slave labor produce,—that of cotton—increased from three bales in 1789, to 5,191,-

4000 bales in 1859 ; most of this was sent to Europe, and all of it was the fruit of the uncompensated and coerced labor of slaves. Without a figure of speech it might be said to have been moistened by the tears, and stained with the blood of the wretched victims who raised it by their toil. Thus did slavery live, and grow, and expand. It lived to make Presidents and Vice Presidents for sixty years. It lived to appoint your Ambassadors and Consuls to all foreign countries. It lived to control the decisions of your Supreme Court, by placing a majority of slaveholding Judges on the bench. It lived to dictate the domestic and foreign policy of the nation, and to rule supreme in all the departments of the State—Legislative, Judicial, Executive and Diplomatic. It lived to exert a domineering influence in every Ecclesiastical Assembly, and to lord it over every national religious institution. The Bible Society could not give a text of Scripture to the slave. The Tract Society dare not publish a tract against slavery. Publishers dare not print any thing offensive to the slaveholders. In fact, the negroes in the South were not more completely subject to the will of the slave power, than were the people of the North. Subserviency to the slave power was the only road to preferment under the Federal Government ; and hence, the loftiest intellects of the North were made to bow and do homage to the Moloch of slavery in the South. Not satisfied with the immense acquisitions of territory I have described, the slave power proceeded to throw down every remaining barrier to the universal extension of slavery. By the law of 1850, the free States of the North were made a hunting ground over which two-legged wolves might roam, in search of their human prey, and seize it at the very horns of the altar. Then came the raid into Kansas, by the border ruffians of Missouri, and all the tragedies that followed. Then the repeal of the Missouri Compromise ; and finally the Dred Scott decision, and the promulgation of the doctrine that the Constitution, of its own force, carried slavery into all the States and Territories of the Union. Four years ago slavery was ubiquitous and omnipotent in this country. Talk of a Union ! Talk of the proud boast of an American—"I am a citizen of the United States." Why, the most estimable man in New England could not cross the Potomac with the reputation of being an anti-slavery man, but at the peril of his life. Mr. Hoar, of Massachusetts, though clothed with the authority of an official envoy, was not permitted to remain unmolested for twelve hours on the soil of South Carolina.

I must leave you to judge what my feelings were, on witnessing the change which the events of the last four years have wrought in the popular sentiment of the Northern States. What a contrast between the state of things when I left Boston, in 1835, and when I returned to Boston, in February last. When I first came to your country, I was branded as a fugitive from justice, a foreign incendiary, an emissary from the despots of Europe, a fanatic and a firebrand. A price was set upon my head ; a gallows was erected at my door ; I was mobbed in every direction ; my friend, Mr. Garrison, was made a scapegoat for my offences, and dragged by a halter through the streets, and I was everywhere hunted like a partridge upon the mountains. Thirty years have passed away, and I stand once more upon your soil. Oh, what a transformation ! The officers of the customs treat me with courtesy and consideration. Massachusetts, through the lips of her thrice noble Governor, bids me welcome to the old Bay State. The citizens of Portland welcome me to Maine. I have a public reception in the city of New York, and another in Philadelphia ; and finally, I stand in the Hall of Representatives, in the Capitol at Washington, and the Vice President of the United States,

in the name of America, bids me welcome to your temple of Liberty and invites me to speak all that it is in my heart to say. (Applause.) Think not that I mention these things to boast of them; or that I am vain enough to appropriate these honors, as due to me. No, I regard myself merely as the representative of those great principles which are now so generally accepted in this country; yet I exult in the change which converts me from a hated outlaw into a cherished guest, knowing that America, in doing honor to the principles of George Thompson, proclaims to the world her purpose to give liberty to the slave. (Applause.)

I have spoken to you of the onward march of slavery, but there has been another great work moving forward in this country opposed to this. It was not because America was not politically free, not because her people had no sufficient knowledge of the criminality of slavery, that they were intolerant of the expression of free opinions, when on a former occasion I visited these shores.

I have shown you from what a small beginning slavery has grown into the mighty power with which you are now contending. From a very small beginning also began another and a different work. Thirty years ago, in a small chamber, friendless and alone, toiled over his types a poor, unlearned young man. The place was dark, comfortless and mean, yet there the freedom of a race began. Thirty years ago, a young man just out of his time as a printer's apprentice, went into a garret in Boston, procured a font of type and a press, and issued the first number of a newspaper, having previously pledged himself to his Maker, that while he could get a crust of bread to eat, he would not abandon the enterprise upon which he had commenced. He took as his motto; "My country is the world, and my countrymen all mankind." In the first number of his paper he advocated the doctrine of immediate emancipation; and declared that whatever opposition he might meet with, or with whatever reproaches he might be assailed, he would be heard, and would abide by the principles he had adopted. All the agitation that has taken place upon this subject of slavery, all the progress that has been made, all the meetings that have been held and are now held to discuss the question of Slavery or Freedom, seem to me but the echo of that printer's voice when he said: "I will be heard." The man I speak of, is my endeared and intimate friend,—William Lloyd Garrison.

From the date of which I have spoken to the present, the work then commenced has gone steadily forward. Small and apparently insignificant at first, the men who adopted the principles and views of Mr. Garrison, gained by degrees a wider and more powerful influence. The weapons used by them were always spiritual, rather than carnal. They gained their influence by a fair use of the living voice, the pen and the press. They issued newspapers and sent forth agents into every part of this country where they could gain admittance. So they went on for ten years; then a small political party was formed, standing between the two great political parties, one of which was led by Clay and Webster, and the other by Calhoun. This party represented so many of the voters of your country as could not conscientiously cast their votes with either of the other parties. At the Presidential Election in 1840, this party nominated a third candidate, desiring at once to publish to the world their belief in universal liberty. Out of a million and a half votes cast at that time, seven thousand votes were given for the nominee of the anti-slavery party. At the next Presidential Election, in 1844, the party polled sixty thousand votes; and in 1848, they polled one hundred and seventy thousand. And so they went on until they nominated Mr. Hale of New Hampshire, then John C. Fremont, and finally Abraham Lincoln.

In the progress of this political revolution you see the fruits of the efforts of those who went forth with their lives in their hands to disseminate anti-slavery principles in this country. Perhaps I know better than those around me the character of the men who began this movement. I deem it the highest privilege of my life, that I was brought thirty years ago into association with the purest, loftiest and best spirits this country has produced during the present century. If I see a harvest now waving before me, I cannot forget that it grew from the seed they sowed beside all waters, through good and evil report for so many years, during the whole of which time they had to make themselves of no reputation, and were regarded as the filth and off-scouring of all things. You realized the fruit of their efforts when the North awoke to a sense of its true position, when the annexation of new States into which slavery was extended, revealed to you the purposes of the South. You realized the fruit of their labor when in 1856 the vote for the Liberty party was greatly increased both in Vermont and other States, and more fully when, in 1860, Abraham Lincoln, by a vote of two millions, was placed in the position which he now so worthily fills.

I know that in my own country there has been much misrepresentation in regard to the cause of this rupture of the North and South. From my intimacy with the politics of this country, not only have I marked the origin and growth of its great political parties, but I am pretty well acquainted also with its smaller ones. You have had besides Whigs, Democrats and Republicans, woolly-heads, hunkers, old line Whigs, lone star men, hard-shell and soft-shell Democrats, and other parties, and I know something of them all. You should not expect, however, that John Bull will be wise in regard to all these parties, and their relations to the welfare of your country, all at once. It requires some familiarity with your affairs to do this, and besides much of his peculiarity is owing to his slowness,—I would say stupidity, were it not that such a term would be hardly kind to my countrymen. There was a slowness then about understanding secession and its causes in England. It is important also here to remember, that the secessionists had their agents in England long before secession was an accomplished fact. They looked forward to the triumph of the Republican party here, and prepared for it. I need not tell you what preparation they made here. You know how Floyd prepared to meet the triumph of the Republican party. You know also how your arsenals were emptied of arms, and how your Navy was sent away from your shores, scattered on various pretences to the ends of the earth, so that only one ship of twenty guns, and another of two were left to guard near the Capital. You remember how Gen. Scott had only a thousand men as soldiers, to guard your public buildings, and protect the archives of your State.

Our friends in England did not understand that the men from the South, who went prowling into the sanctums of the editors of our leading English journals, who crowded themselves into the society of respectable persons, had a special object of their own in view, in speaking against you of the North. The English people were led to believe that the South had seceded from the North, because of injuries received. When this was broke out, it took sometime to convince them that their impressions were false with regard to this. The scribes who wrote for the most influential of our periodicals, had taken up against you, (well paid indeed for doing so) and misled the people. They, however, felt a deep interest in the success of Mr. Lincoln, when he was nominated for the Presidency. The people of England rejoiced most sincerely, when it was known that he was elected. Then came the rebellion. Before Mr.

Lincoln had left Springfield, States were in arms against him, and a confederacy had been formed. When he ascended the presidential chair, and war was declared, and seventy-five thousand volunteers were called for, the people of England did not manifest that interest in your behalf, which you had a right to expect.

But allow me to say to you in extenuation of what may appear to you a strange course on their part, that there were many events transpiring here, calculated to lead the people of England and of every other country to doubt whether you had undertaken this war simply to maintain the Constitution, or from a love for liberty and with the determination to emancipate the slave. I need not remind you of the language used by Mr. Lincoln himself upon this subject, nor of the statements made by Mr. Seward in his correspondence, nor of the resolutions framed by Congress, nor of the inducements held out to Maryland and Virginia, to return to their allegiance. You are familiar with the events to which I refer, and the language that was used. You are aware that the newspapers also took the ground that the object of the war was rather to sustain the Constitution than to abolish slavery. They found fault with the abolitionists, insisting that they were putting a false issue before the people, and were endeavoring to change a war really for the Union into a war for the freedom of the slaves. These facts with which you are familiar, when they came to be known in England, were taken advantage of, by the emissaries of secession, and also by our own leading journal, the *London Times*. It was asserted and believed, that the main object of the war on the part of the North, was not the putting away of slavery, nor even the diminishing the extent of its domain. But when those glorious measures were taken up and carried forward by your last Congress, which looked toward the emancipation of the slaves, the feeling of England was changed. There has of late been a feeling prevalent in England strongly in your favor. I do not say that this feeling is universal, because in England there are two classes. There is an aristocratic class there that has always opposed reforms of every kind, and in all our advancement in that country, they have steadily opposed the progress of free principles. This class constitute the very party that for a long time upheld slavery in the West India Islands. For thirty-five years they successfully opposed the efforts of Granville, Sharp, and Wilberforce, in their attempts to bring about the extinction of slavery. They resisted until it became a question with the people of England, whether they would see Christianity die and become extinct, or slavery; and only when the people arose in all the might which their moral power gave them, was the Parliament of England induced, or rather compelled, to emancipate the slaves of the West Indies.

Let it not then surprise you, that the South finds sympathy among such a class,—a class among whom may be found those who love money better than they love their God. Let it soften your feeling of disapprobation, and mitigate your displeasure to know, that while the leading class, the heads of society in England, are wrong, the people of Great Britain are right. (Applause.) The working men of England, particularly those of the manufacturing class, are very strongly in your favor. That portion of this class that work in the cotton mills, have had their good will for you brought to a severe test. They had been dependent upon the South for a supply of cotton; the war cut off this supply. Hundreds of thousands of these workmen were thereby thrown out of employment, and walked the streets pale and wan, suffering destitution and hunger. They were compelled to accept eleemosynary assistance, and to go to the parish for aid. And why was all this destitution and

suffering? Why was the machinery of those mills idle? and why did those tall chimneys cease to send forth their volumes of smoke? It was for lack of cotton. And yet in this country there were four millions of bales of cotton, along the banks of the rivers leading down to the coast, and these were kept from the cotton buyers of England by your blockade. Now have the people of England ever presented a petition to Parliament, asking that the blockade might be broken through? Have they asked for any interference that would retard the progress of liberty here? (Applause.) I am here to tell you, that having addressed for three successive years, the people of those districts to which I have referred, having spoken to hundreds of thousands of them in the course of that time, I never addressed an assembly of such men, when I did not find that they were ready to make any sacrifice, that the cause of freedom might advance. When I put it to them, whether they were willing for such a cause to still go cold, and hungry, and to beg, they said emphatically, "*yes*, we will suffer, or we will labor, but let the negroes go free."

But what of our other, and higher class as they are termed, what shall be said of the part they have enacted in regard to the contest in which you are engaged? What if my Lord Brougham in his dotage, a garrulous old man of eighty-seven, what if he sometimes forgetting where he is, thinks that social science consists in undervaluing or ridiculing American institutions, and praising those of Great Britain as superior to all others? What if my Lord Roebuck or my Lord Gregory, say bitter things of America? What if my Lord Campbell,—a man who should scarcely be held accountable, so small is his head and so narrow his intellect, (laughter,) says slighting things of you? I am here to tell you that the best minds and loftiest and clearest intellects, and I am sure the noblest hearts of England, are with you. (Applause.) I may mention of this number, John Stuart Mill, our profoundest thinker; also Professor Kearnes who has written a book upon America, unsurpassed by any that has been produced by your own countrymen; also Goldwin Smith, a man of great ability and learning, and Regius Professor at Oxford. Let no man persuade you that England, as a whole, is opposed to your prosperity, much less to your freedom. The people of England are deeply penetrated with a sense of what our country owes to yours. Have you not bestowed a home and heritage on many of our people? Have you not given to all who have desired it, the title in fee simple of a homestead in the far West? Have you not enriched us by the commerce that has passed between our country and yours for so many years? Are we not of the same language, of the same stock, reading a common literature, worshipping at a common altar, and hoping for the same Heaven? No Englishman coming to America, feels that he is visiting a strange land. He is leaving his father's home for that of his brother. We feel that there should not be a disagreement between you and us. Why, my friends, if you have not been represented by a large party in England, a party which if not the largest, yet exerts a predominant moral influence there, how has it come to pass, that every measure has failed in Parliament, that has looked toward a recognition of the South as an independent power? What has put an end to that infamous proceeding that was for some time carried forward by the ship-builders, in sending forth those corsairs of the sea, that have ravaged your commerce? What has, of late, kept these diabolical rams at home? What has spiked the political guns of England? How is it that not a successful political meeting has been held there to favor the South, while your President has had so many addresses from the people of England, expressing sympathy for your cause, to reply to? What does this prove but that there

are two nations in England, one for the right of the people everywhere, and for freedom, and the other a nation that claims despotic power, and has striven and is striving to maintain it?

Forty years ago, I, as a dissenter from the established Church of England, was not eligible to any municipal office, could not be admitted to the bar, could not enter one of the universities, could not take a command in the army. No man was eligible to any of these offices, unless he was a member of the established Church and could produce a certificate from the clerk of his parish, to the effect that he was a regular communicant. The dissenters were at that time poor for the most part; they had no representation in Parliament. In time, however, they gained in strength and numbers, and at length compelled the ruling classe to grant them that equality of civil privileges which they now enjoy. So too, previous to 1830, eight millions of Irishmen were oppressed by the laws, and may be said to have been in chains—subject to an overbearing and haughty aristocracy. At length, however, by agitation, and by resolute and combined assertion of their rights, they wrung the privileges which belonged to them from their oppressors. So too long ago, when the people of England demanded a franchise, a representation in the Commons House of Parliament, they had to go to a House composed of the very men against whom they were contending, men who had returned themselves to Parliament, and were called borough mongers. At length, however, by long continued agitation and discussion, they gained a recognition of their rights from a Parliament composed of these very borough mongers. Then again there was the West India interest, that endeavored to control the Parliament, contrary to the will of the people. This interest undertook to have a Parliament of its own that would sustain the slave system. But here again the people of Great Britain triumphed, after a long course of peaceful agitation. Perhaps, however, the greatest triumph of this kind for the people, was the repeal of the corn laws. I know something about this, for I was for five years engaged in helping to bring it about, working with such men as Richard Cobden and John Bright. (Applause). While other movements were on foot to modify these laws, we aimed at nothing less than their utter extinction. It was for the interest of the lords of the soil to continue these laws. But these men were in power and controlled the Parliament. To these very men we had to make our application for repeal. By a long course of peaceful agitation, however, as you well know, success was gained at last, and the abolition of the corn laws was wrung from a Parliament composed of those who had opposed this very measure; and the bounteous harvests of your Western prairies were made accessible to the people of Great Britain. Those who in England favored the abolition of the bread laws, now favor your course, and those who were opposed to that measure, are now opposed to you. (Applause.)

Need I say, my friends, in my own behalf, that in this great struggle I am with you? You can scarcely desire that the issue of this great contest shall be the restoration of your Union, and the purification of your country from what has hitherto been its blemish and reproach, more than I do. I am especially anxious, feverishly anxious, with regard to the issue of the struggle at this moment in progress, with regard to what is now going forward at the South. I believe you may trust your gallant army there. (Applause.) I do not believe that the people of the North can do better than to act upon the advice tendered them by the distinguished gentlemen who command the corps of that army.

Nothing is more evident, even to a casual observer of what is going forward in this country at the present time, than that the future welfare

of this country depends upon the triumph at the North of that party which stands opposed to the party which recently issued its manifesto from Chicago. Were I an American citizen, I have no doubt as to the course I should pursue, in order to secure liberty and free institutions and a Republican form of Government for my country. In saying what I now say, I do not intend to find fault with my own country. I was born an Englishman and am proud to be an Englishman. I have lived for thirty-five years under the rule of one of the most excellent and virtuous of ladies. (Applause.) I have enjoyed nearly as much liberty there as you enjoy in this country, and at one period of my life I enjoyed more liberty there than I could hope for here. But if I was an American citizen (and I should have no objection to being one and peradventure I may die one) I should use all my influence, and all the talent I could command, and every means in my power, to secure the re-election to the Presidential Chair of Abraham Lincoln. (Long continued applause.)

My friends, I think I have already said that nothing has occurred in your country which has delighted your friends in England more than the election of Abraham Lincoln four years ago. We thought it a grand spectacle, that when you had to look among thirty millions of people to find a man to fill the office of Chief Magistrate, you passed over the leaders of great political parties, you did not seek for a man of oratorical power, you took up with a plain man, one who had been a herds-boy, a bargeman, a rail-splitter. (Applause.) You took up this man, rough-hewed, and you lifted him above the heads of his fellows and made him President of the United States, by the style and title.—a prouder one does not exist—of honest Abraham Lincoln. (Applause.) According to the spirit and letter of the Constitution you elected him. At previous Presidential elections you had been defeated, but you had never rebelled or threatened to rebel, but had submitted to the national will.

At length you gained a victory for free principles, and elected Abraham Lincoln President of the United States. He never has been President of the whole United States; and now let me urge every loyal American to insist upon keeping him in that presidential chair until he is President of the United States. (Applause.) Let the South learn the majesty of the law they have insulted and defied in his person, and know that it shall be vindicated. I believe that Abraham Lincoln deserves a re-election. He has piloted you through darkness and danger in the hour of peril. Now that he has borne the burden and heat of the day, and has endured the hardships of adversity, he should hold the place of honor in the hour of your triumph. If you are about to be entirely victorious, as I believe you are, surely you should continue him in the position that he has filled so worthily. I trust that he may live to finish the work he has so well begun. Look a moment at what has been accomplished. See the National Capital purged from slavery. When Mr. Morrill goes to take his seat in Congress, he will see no slave market now in the District of Columbia. Look at the Northwest: the dominion of slavery is broken there, and those states are wholly or prospectively free. Everywhere the condition of your colored population is improved and improving. The freedmen are gaining knowledge, and engaging in the various pursuits and avocations of their white brethren. The representatives of Hayti and Liberia are received at Washington, and placed upon an equality with the ambassadors of other nations. Missouri has adopted measures for emancipation, and is prospectively free, and Kentucky, where the venerable Dr. Breckenridge has spoken so clearly for free principles, will, I believe, soon be free also.

Again I express the hope that Mr. Lincoln may live to finish the work

he has begun. And when he shall cease to labor and to live, and your children and your children's children shall stand around his grave, may they say in the words of our poet.

"How sleep the good, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
Than fancy's feet have ever trod.
By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung,
There honor comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there."

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives of Vermont, Citizens of Montpelier, Ladies and Gentlemen ;—In leaving this platform, allow me to assure you that so long as this struggle shall last, every pulse of one Englishman's heart shall beat true to the cause in which your country is engaged.

"O that I may live to see
Your hills, your dales and valleys free!
That blessing dear, is all I crave
Between my labors and my grave."

(Applause.)



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